IN THE CLAIMS:

1   1. (Currently Amended) A method for proxying data access commands from a first stor-

2   age system to a second storage system in a storage system cluster, ~~the method~~ comprising

3   ~~the steps of~~:

4   <u>in response to a failure in communication between a client and the second storage</u>

5   <u>system,</u> receiving, <u>at a proxy port on the first storage system,</u> a data access command at

6   the first storage system that is directed to the second storage system;

7   forwarding the received data access command to the second storage system via a

8   cluster interconnect;

9   processing the data access command at the second storage system;

10   returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage system via

11   the cluster interconnect; and

12   sending a response to the data access command to ~~a~~ <u>the</u> client from the first stor-

13   age system.

1   2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein the storage systems are storage

2   appliances ~~and wherein the data access command is received at a proxy port associated~~

3   ~~with the first storage appliance~~.

1   3. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the proxy port comprises a physical port.

1   4. (Original) The method of claim 2 wherein the proxy port comprises a virtual port as-

2   sociated with a physical port.

1   5. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the response comprises requested read

2   data.

1 6. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the response comprises an acknowledge-

2 ment of a write operation.

1 7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the response comprises a predetermined set

2 of read data.

1 8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the cluster interconnect comprises a direct

2 link between the first storage system and the second storage system.

1 9. -16. (Cancelled)

1 17. (Currently Amended) A method for proxying data access commands in a first stor-

2 age system to a second system in a storage system cluster, ~~the method~~ comprising the

3 ~~steps of~~:

4 in response to a failure in communication between a client and the second storage

5 system, receiving, at a proxy port on the first storage system, a data access command at

6 the first storage system that is directed to the second storage system:

7 analyzing a received data access command at the first storage system~~;~~;

8 forwarding the received data access command to the second storage system; and

9 processing the received data access command at the second storage system.

1 18. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 further comprising ~~the steps of~~;

2 returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage system;

3 and

4 sending a response to the data access command to the client from the first storage

5 system.

1   19. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 17 wherein the step of forwarding fur-

2   ther comprises the-step-of forwarding the data access command to the second storage sys-

3   tem via a cluster interconnect.

1   20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the cluster interconnect comprises a fi-

2   bre channel link.

1   21. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the cluster interconnect comprises a di-

2   rect link between the first storage system and the second storage system.

1   22. (Cancelled)

1   23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22 17 wherein the proxy port comprises

2   a physical port.

1   24. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 22 17 wherein the proxy port comprises

2   a virtual port associated with the physical port.

1   25. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the response comprises requested read

2   data.

1   26. (Original) The method of claim 18 wherein the response comprises an acknowl-

2   edgement of the write operation.

1   27. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium media, including program in-

2   structions executing on a computer, for proxying data access commands from a first stor-

3   age system to a second storage system in a storage system cluster, the computer readable

4   medium media including instructions for performing the steps of:

5   in response to a failure in communication between a client and the second storage

6   system, receiving, at a proxy port on the first storage system, a data access command at

7   the first storage system that is directed to the second storage system;

8   forwarding the received data access command to the second storage system via a

9   cluster interconnect;

10   processing the data access command at the second storage system;

11   returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage system via

12   the cluster interconnect; and

13   sending a response to the data access command to a the client from the first stor-

14   age system.

1   28. (Currently Amended) A system for proxying data access commands from a first

2   storage system to a second storage system connected via a cluster interconnect, the sys-

3   tem comprising:

4   in response to a failure in communication between a client and the second storage

5   system, means for receiving a data access command at the first storage system that is di-

6   rected to the second storage system;

7   means for forwarding the received data access command to the second storage

8   system via a cluster interconnect;

9   means for processing the data access command at the second storage system;

10   means for returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage

11   system via the cluster interconnect; and

12   means for sending a response to the data access command to a the client from the

13   first storage system.

1   29. (Currently Amended) The method system of claim 28 wherein storage systems are

2   storage appliances and the data access command is received at a proxy port associated

3   with the first storage appliance.

30. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 29 wherein the proxy port comprises a physical port.

31. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 29 wherein the proxy port comprises a virtual port associated with a physical port.

32. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 28 wherein the response comprises requested read data.

33. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 28 wherein the response comprises an acknowledgement of a write operation.

34. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 28 wherein the response comprises a predetermined set of read data.

34. (Currently Amended) The ~~method~~ system of claim 28 wherein the response comprises a predetermined set of read data.

35. (Currently Amended) A method for proxying data access commands from a first storage system to a second storage system in a storage system cluster, the method comprising:

in response to a failure in communication between a client and the second storage system, receiving a data access command at the first storage system that is directed to the second storage system;

forwarding a data access command from the first storage system to the second storage system;

processing the data access command at the second storage system; and

returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage system.

1 36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 further comprises sending a re-

2 sponse to the data access command from the first storage system.

1 37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 wherein the data access command is

2 forwarded via a cluster interconnect.

1 38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 further comprises receiving by the

2 first storage system the data access command that is directed to the second storage sys-

3 tem.

1 39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 35 further comprises returning the re-

2 sponse from the first storage system to a client.

1 40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 39 wherein the response is returned via

2 the cluster interconnect.

1   Please add claims 41 *et al.*

1   41. (New) A method for proxying data access commands from a first storage system to a

2   second storage system in a storage system cluster, comprising:

3   receiving a data access command at the first storage system;

4   determining the data access command was received at a proxy port on the first

5   storage system;

6   passing the data access command to a local virtual adapter;

7   forwarding the received data access command to the second storage system via a

8   cluster interconnect;

9   processing the data access command at the second storage system;

10   returning a response from the second storage system to the first storage system via

11   the cluster interconnect; and

12   sending a response to the data access command to a client from the first storage

13   system.

1   42. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the data access command is directed to the

2   second storage system.

1   43. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the proxy port comprises a physical port.

1   44. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the proxy port comprises a virtual port.

1   45. (New) The method of claim 41, wherein the first storage system receives the data ac-

2   cess command in response to a communication failure between the client and the second

3   storage system.

1   46. (New) A system for proxying data access commands from a first storage system to a

2   second storage system in a storage system cluster, comprising:

3   a proxy port on the first storage system, the proxy port to receive a data access

4   command that is directed to the second storage system in response to a failure in commu-

5   nication between a client and the second storage system;

6   a local virtual adapter on the first storage system, the local virtual adapter to for-

7   ward the received data access command to the second storage system via a cluster inter-

8   connect;

9   a processor on the second storage system, the processor configured to process the

10   data access command at the second storage system;

11   a partner virtual adapter on the second storage system, the partner virtual adapter

12   to return a response from the second storage system to the first storage system via the

13   cluster interconnect; and

14   a network adapter to send a response to the data access command to a client from

15   the first storage system.

1   47. (New) The system of claim 46, wherein the first storage system further comprises a

2   local virtual target module to determine the data access command was received at a proxy

3   port on the first storage system, and the local virtual target module to pass the data access

4   command to the local virtual adapter.

1   48. (New) The system of claim 46, wherein the proxy port comprises a physical port.

1   49. (New) The system of claim 46, wherein the proxy port comprises a virtual port.